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Dr. Leatherbury has some good news for you about the Microsoft Campus Agreement .

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If you purchased a **Premium Remote Access** Service subscription for the summer semester -- or had paid through the summer -- and you want to keep it, you will need to renew it. You may also need to take action to ensure the continuation of your UNT Internet Account, under certain circumstances.

[Accessing GroupWise E-mail From Home](#)

The GroupWise client that you use at work is now available for you to use from home. If you have an Internet connection, either with a UNT Internet Account or through a separate Internet Service Provider, you can access your GroupWise E-mail box from home.

[SPSS on CMS to be Dropped](#)

If you do research on the academic mainframe, you will be interested in this article about the fate of SPSS on CMS.

[The UNIX Question](#)

Duane Gustavus, UNIX Research Analyst, asks the rhetorical question, "Why UNIX?" You may be surprised by his answer.

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This month, Wil Clark gives you his "It might be a hoax if..." list -- and more.

[Going Somewhere?](#)

Sharon Marek, UNT Central Web Support Web Developer, gives you some valuable web-based travel tips.

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RSS Matters

By [Rich Herrington](#), Research and Statistical Support Services

Introduction to S-Plus 5.1 on UNIX (SOL)

The Research and Statistical Support group (RSS) has recently upgraded S-Plus on SOL from version 5.0 to version 5.1. In this column we will cover basic operations using S-Plus on SOL. This is part one of a three part series on using Splus on SOL.

Connecting to S-Plus

In order to view graphical output on SOL a graphics device needs to be opened. You will need to have a x-window open or be using x-window emulator software. The College of Arts and Sciences (CAS) currently runs X-Win32 on the GAB, Terrell Hall, and Wooten Hall Servers. After starting X-Win32 on your local desktop, and before entering S-PLUS, the UNIX display needs to be routed to your IP address. To do this from the UNIX prompt, type:

```
xterm -ls -display 129.120.56.150:0 &
```

where the ipaddress is the address assigned to your machine (i.e. it is a number like 129.120.56.150:0). In WIN95/98 one can run the program "winipcfg" to get the ipaddress for your desktop PC. Before starting S-Plus, it would be a good idea to create a directory where all the data objects created in Splus can be stored. From the Unix prompt:

```
mkdir projects
cd projects
```

Now create a chapter file within this directory:

```
Splus5 CHAPTER
```

This creates the hidden file ".Data" in this directory. This file will hold all of the objects created during your S-Plus session. This includes all objects that are created: scripts, data, graphs, etc. You can have multiple directories with different ".Data" files. Once the chapter file is created, S-Plus is invoked at the Unix prompt:

```
Splus5
```

You will see

```
S-PLUS : Copyright (c) 1988, 1999 MathSoft, Inc.
S : Copyright Lucent Technologies, Inc.
Version 5.1 Release 1 for Sun SPARC, SunOS 5.5 : 1999
Working data will be in .Data
> █
```

Importing Data Files Into S-Plus

One method of getting data into S-Plus for data analysis and graphing is to import the data file. The S-Plus function that allows one to do this is the "importData" function.

Using the importData function, S-Plus can import from the following file types: ASCII, dBase, Microsoft Excel, FoxPro, Gauss, Informix, Gauss, Lotus, MatLab, Oracle, Quattro Pro, windows SPSS .sav and SPSS .por, windows SAS .sd2 and SAS .tpt, .xpt, STATA, Sybase, and Systat. You

can read a windows SPSS data file into S-Plus using the following:

```
data<-importData("data.sav")
```

The assignment operator "<-" assigns the output of the importData function into an objects named "data". To display the contents of your working directory use the objects function:

```
objects()
```

To display the contents of a data object, type the name of the object and hit return:

```
data
```

You see the following:

```
> data<-importData("data.sav")
> objects()
[1] ".Last.value"      ".Messages"      ".Random.seed"
[4] "atoq.1.46.dat"    "atoq.1.46b.dat" "atoq.col.100.sum"
[7] "atoq.col.200.sum" "atoq.col.300.sum" "atoq.col.400.sum"
[10] "atoq.col.457.sum" "atoq.col.sum"    "atoq.dat"
[13] "atoq2.dat"        "atoqprob.2.47.dat" "atoqprob.2.47b.dat"
[16] "atoqprob.dat"     "data"            "last.dump"
[19] "prim4"            "prim4.fac"       "rawprop.dat"
[22] "sum2"             "x"               "x.dat"
[25] "x.sum"
> data
var00001 var00002 var00003
1      1      2      3
2      4      5      6
3      7      8      9
> █
```

Using S-Plus in Batch Mode

An alternative to interactive processing in S-Plus is the "batch" processing of S-Plus scripts. This is accomplished by creating a file that contains S-Plus commands which is then submitted for processing. S-Plus has a command allowing one to shell out to the UNIX operating system. Upon completion, control reverts back to the interactive S-Plus session. Thus, one can edit a file and submit it for processing without exiting the S-Plus session. For example, one can issue the following UNIX commands at the UNIX prompt or use the exclamation mark (!) to "shell" out to the UNIX environment whereby the command is executed. For example:

```
richherr@sol /projects/sol/richherr % Splus5
S-PLUS : Copyright (c) 1988, 1999 MathSoft, Inc.
S : Copyright Lucent Technologies, Inc.
Version 5.1 Release 1 for Sun SPARC, SunOS 5.5 : 1999
Working data will be in .Data
> !pico example.ssc █
```

This invokes the "Pico" editor within the S-Plus session.

```
UW PICO(tm) 2.9      File: example.ssc      Modified
x<-rnorm(10)
x
█

[ Read 3 lines ]
^G Get Help  ^O WriteOut  ^R Read File  ^Y Prev Pg  ^K Cut Text  ^C Cur Pos
^X Exit      ^J Justify    ^W Where is  ^N Next Pg  ^U UnCut Text ^T To Spell
```

A file is created (example.ssc) which contains: 1st line - an assignment of 10 random numbers to the data object "x", 2nd line – the contents of "x" is listed. The file is saved by the key sequence "Ctrl-O", "Ctrl-X". Control reverts back to the S-Plus session. Once back in the S-Plus session. The file can then be submitted for batch processing. Once submitted the output can viewed within the S-Plus session using the UNIX command "more". For example:

```
> !Splus5 BATCH example.ssc example.out
> !more example.out
S-PLUS : Copyright (c) 1988, 1999 MathSoft, Inc.
S : Copyright Lucent Technologies, Inc.
Version 5.1 Release 1 for Sun SPARC, SunOS 5.5 : 1999
Working data will be in .Data
> x<-rnorm(10)
> x
[1] 0.2718807 -0.2354967 0.1925765 -0.3835263 -0.4013729 0.1724819
[7] 0.5381853 1.6538538 -0.8547855 0.1699303
>
> █
```

Other Useful S-Plus Operations

The History Function

The "history" function allows one to pull up a listing of commands that have been utilized during the current S-Plus session. In an S-Plus session:


```
> history(1)
1: X <- mvrnorm(100, 2, S = diag(rep(1 - 0.2, 2)) + 0.8)
2: X <- mvrnorm(nt, p = 4, S = diag(rep(1 - rho, 4)) + rho)
3: nt <- 100
4: X <- mvrnorm(nt, p = 4, S = diag(rep(1 - rho, 4)) + rho)
5: X <- mvrnorm(nt, p = 4, S = diag(rep(1 - rho, 4)) + rho)
6: X <- mvrnorm(nt, p = 4, S = diag(rep(1 - rho, 4)) + rho)
7: mvrnorm <- function(n, p = 1, u = rep(0, p), S = diag(p))
{
  Z <- matrix(rnorm(n * p), p, n)
  t(u + t(chol(S)) %*% Z)
}
8: X <- mvrnorm(100, p = 4, S = diag(rep(1 - rho, 4)) + rho)
9: X <- mvrnorm(10000, p = 4, S = diag(rep(1 - rho, 4)) + rho)
10: rnorm(100000)
Selection: |
```

The history function displays the last 10 commands used during the S-Plus session. Other uses of the history function include:

```
history()
# puts up a menu of last 10 expressions; choose one to evaluate
history(max=20) # choose one from the last 20
history("plot") # recent expressions containing word plot
history(plot)
history(call="plot", max=1) # re-evaluate the last call to plot
history(call=plot, max=1)
history(x, max=1, editor=T)
# re-evaluate the last expression containing x, but let me edit
# it first.
history(menu=F, eval=F, reverse=F, file="S.exprs")
# write the last 10 expressions to a file in chronological order
history(call=f, eval=F, menu=F)
# print but do not evaluate recent calls to f
again() # re-evaluate the last expression
value <- again(editor=T) # edit and then re-evaluate last expression;
# assign the result under value
again(plot) # re-evaluate the last expression containing word plot
```

The Scan Function

The scan() function can be used to read in numeric data into a matrix. Suppose the file "data2" contains data which is stored in 3 columns. The data would be read in as follows:

```
> data2.mat<-matrix(scan("data2"),ncol=3, byrow=T)
```

To read in character data, the argument what=character() must be specified:

```
>data2.mat<-matrix(scan("data2"),ncol=3, what=character(), byrow=T)
```

To quit from S-Plus use the following at the Splus prompt:

```
>q()
```

Next time

Next time we'll cover S-Plus data structures, indexing operations for these data structures, and data subsetting. In the final installment we will cover programming constructs (e.g. writing functions, loops, branching operations).

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Network Connection

By [Dr. Philip Baczewski](#), Associate Director of Academic Computing

The more things change...

This Internet thing is really starting to be useful. As a computing professional, I am lucky to have access to some of the latest technology. For example, my workstation of choice is a 400MhZ (that's hertz, not hurtz) PowerMac G3. Until I got this new PowerMac, I thought that the Internet or our local connection to it was slow. I found out that in fact it was my previous computer that was slow and that Web pages load pretty fast when your computer can draw the graphics at lightning speed (of course, sometimes I still have to wait on those slow Internet links out there).

Most recently, I decided to take advantage of my Internet horse power and watch the streaming video version of Steve Job's MacWorld keynote address (see <http://www.apple.com/quicktime/showcase/live/mwny99/>). As a Macophile, this was interesting enough, but it feature the introduction of Apple's iBook, the portable version of the iMac. This chance to get a glimpse of this new technological marvel as described by it's ultimate champion was enough to cause me to listen to the entirety of the speech.

The play's the thing...

Before seeing the actual iBook introduction, another highlight of Job's speech caught my attention. Apple is not only positioning the iMac as the premier home Internet workstation, but is trying to attract computer game players as well as game developers. With accelerated 3D graphics cards in all of the latest Macintosh flavors, Apple's assertion that the Macintosh is not just a stodgy graphics editing station is well supported. To bring this point home at MacWorld, Jobs invited Jason Jones, the boyish looking cofounder of Bungie Software (<http://www.bungie.com/>), to the MacWorld stage to show off their latest development named "Halo" (<http://halo.bungie.com>), to be released some time in the next year (I'd say "next millenium, but as we all know, that doesn't start until 2001).

Master Jones proceeded to show off about a 4-minute graphics snippet which was all beautifully rendered on the Macintosh in real time. The scenes included well-crafted and realistically presented landscapes from a fictional "ring construct", ostensibly, a not-very-subtle rip-off of Larry Niven's 1970 "Ringworld" creation of the like-titled book (Ballantine Books, ISBN: 0345333926). In spite of the cliché game music which alternated between pseudo-chant and typical rhythmic ostenato, this demonstration of virtual reality would have been really impressive if it had not been for one thing which was painfully obvious to me: all they could think to do in this beautifully-created environment was to have their virtual characters shoot weapons at each other.

A Creativity Deficit

Maybe I'm just a cynical quadrogenarian who doesn't understand the appeal of such games, or maybe I'm hypersensitized by recent incidents of gun violence, or maybe I am just amazed by the lack of real creativity in the people who develop such games. Is it really worth the effort of creating such an elaborate virtual reality if all you can do is simulate military violence (to quote Bungie: "The player is a military recon unit of the human race's

fledgling planetary empire. Pursued by alien warships to a massive and ancient ring construct deep in the void, the player must single-handedly improvise a guerilla war over land, sea and air....")?

Halo is also a multiplayer game as described by Bungie: "...Players will use entirely different skills, strategies, vehicles and weapons to compete in a variety of game types. Three players might take the roles of driver, shotgun and rear gunner of a light, fast all-terrain vehicle, roaring and bouncing over uneven ground toward the enemy fortress, ducking under a hail of fire from alien aircraft screaming overhead. Halo's multiplayer game will be an experience that is as much lived as played."

It seems to me that there must be a huge creativity deficit on the part of those who develop such software. I could start railing against the negative influence such games must have on children and advocating a ban on their sales, but then I might appear to be a preacher, or worse, a Republican. Instead, I'll attempt to address this creativity deficit by offering some game ideas of my own which I will place in the public domain to be developed by the next young computer genius that comes along. I guaranty that these can be an experience that is "as much lived as played."

Action Galore

PhD: an action adventure game in which the main character attempts to navigate bureaucracy of graduate school, dodge the political crossfire of intradepartmental politics, survive graduate seminars, and pass sadistic tests of disciplinary trivia in order to obtain a prized certification of academic expertise. It features an environment of endless hallways, classrooms, and library stacks although there is not much opportunity to explore an outside natural environment.

Assistant Professor: an action adventure game in which the main character attempts to navigate bureaucracy of a university, dodge the political crossfire of intradepartmental politics, survive intense interviews, and pass sadistic tests of disciplinary trivia in order to obtain a employment which pays 40-60% less than a comparable private-sector job. It features an environment of endless hallways, classrooms, and library stacks although there is not much opportunity to explore an outside natural environment (Hmmm -- this one sounds familiar).

Symphony Orchestra: an action adventure game in which the main character attempts to navigate bureaucracy of a non-profit organization, dodge the political crossfire of intersectional politics, survive intense rehearsals, and pass sadistic tests of musical dexterity in order to obtain a employment which pays 40-60% less than a comparable private-sector job. It features an environment of endless hallways, rehearsal rooms, and performance halls although there is not much opportunity to explore an outside natural environment (a more limited environment, but, potentially, the music's great).

A final thought

OK, perhaps my ideas are not the best, but I still say that there must be some alternative to the shoot-em-up cliches that are offered as the hottest new games. The technology which enables the creation of virtual realities is amazing but I'm still waiting for popular U.S. culture to make equal strides. This might happen when someone combines a virtual creation with some thought processes that go beyond the basest of human instincts. Here's one more idea: how about a game in which the object is to avoid shooting at other characters and to

prevent other characters from shooting at each other. From what I know of the world, there are many places where such game skills are greatly needed.

Comments, Questions? Send them to [Philip Baczewski](#).

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List of the Month

Each month we highlight one Internet, USENET Special Interest Group (SIG), or similar mailing list.

HeroTalk

Last month, our "List of the Month" was [HeroicStories](#) . It turns out that a lot of the subscribers to HeroicStories have expressed a desire for a place on the Internet where they could share their comments about the stories with each other. In response to those requests, [Randy Cassingham](#), Editor of HeroicStories has created a new discussion list called HeroTalk.

To subscribe to the HeroTalk discussion list, E-mail HeroTalk-subscribe@topica.com . If you prefer Web access, see <http://www.topica.com/lists/HeroTalk/read> -- you'll have to register with Topica and can then either have the list messages posted to you or you can read them via the Topica Web site. The discussion area can be used to talk about the stories, discuss the topics raised, and trade ideas about how to spread the concept to more readers.

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WWW@UNT.EDU

By [Mark Wilcox](#), Campus Web Administrator

Bringing UNIX to Windows, one Perl Script at a Time

If you have ever spent much time working on UNIX and then have to do work on a Windows 95/98/NT machine you know that you always wish that Windows supported command <insert favorite missing command here>. Or perhaps you administer an NT server and try to solve a problem, only wishing there was an easier way to do it from the command line like you've seen UNIX sys admins do.

Well there is a project under way to solve these problems; the Perl Power Tools project. Tom Christiansen, who's one of the world experts on Perl has started a new project called "The Perl Power Tools: Unix Reconstruction Project". This project's goals are to rewrite all of the basic UNIX command set as a suite of pure (e.g. no C library dependencies) Perl scripts and to have fun doing it. These scripts can then be copied and ready to run on any system that has a working Perl5 interpreter (which is a lot more systems than a certain caffeinated language ;).

They are free to use and for you to build upon, just like most other things built in/with Perl. I'm already pleased that I know have a working "tail" command for my Windows NT based servers at home.

If you'd like more information see <http://language.perl.com/ppt/>

Until next time.

Mark

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Short Courses

By [Claudia Lynch](#), *Benchmarks* Editor

Summer Short Courses are over. Fall courses should be scheduled and announced by September 1. Check the [Short Courses](#) page to see if the new schedule has been posted yet.

Especially for New Students

This fall, Academic Computing Services will be offering a course for people -- especially students -- who are new to UNT. The course, titled "Introduction to Computing Services at UNT," will be available on a first-come, first-served basis. Following are the dates and times for this course:

Three two-hour sessions, held in the SLIS Computer Classroom (ISB 203):

- Tuesday, August 24, 2-4 p.m.
- Wednesday, August 25, 2-4 p.m.
- Thursday, August 26, 2-4 p.m.

Three two-hour sessions, held in the Eagle Student Services Lab (ESS 152):

- Monday, August 30, 2-4 p.m.
- Tuesday, August 31, 2-4 p.m.
- Wednesday, September 1, 2-4 p.m.

Customized Short Courses

Faculty members can request customized short courses from ACS, geared to their class needs. Other groups can request special courses also. Contact ACS for more information (ISB 119, 565-4068, lynch@unt.edu).

Especially for Faculty and Staff Members

In addition to the [ACS Short Courses](#), which are available to students, faculty and staff, staff and faculty members can take courses offered through the [Human Resources](#) Department, the [Center for Distributed Learning](#), and the UNT Libraries' [Multimedia Development Lab](#).

Center for Distributed Learning

The Center for Distributed Learning offers courses especially for Faculty Members. Topics include Windows 95, PowerPoint, Video Conferencing, and a series of classes concerning putting course materials on the World Wide Web

using WebCT®.

The center offers a "Brown Bag" series which meets for lunch the first Thursday of each month at Noon in ISB 204. The purpose of this group is to bring faculty members together to share their experiences with distributed learning. One demonstration will be made at each meeting by a faculty member with experience in distributed learning. Each meeting is followed, for those interested in using WebCT®, by a one hour orientation for beginners in ISB 203. More information on these activities can be found at the [Center for Distributed Learning](#) Web site.

UNT Libraries'

The UNT Libraries' Multimedia Development Lab has also offered free training to all University of North Texas faculty and staff in the basics of FrontPage 98 and information architecture in the past. For more information visit the Multimedia Development Lab's home page at <http://www.library.unt.edu/mmdl>

Technical Training

Technical Training for campus network managers is available through the Campus-Wide Networks division of the Computing Center. Some of the [seminars](#), such as one on disaster recovery/business continuity planning techniques, may be of interest to others on campus as well.

Alternate Forms of Training

The [Training](#) Web site has all sorts of information about alternate forms of training. Training tapes, Computer Based Training (CBT) and Web-based training are some of the alternatives offered. There are also handouts for computer training (Microsoft Office 97 and Windows 95) on the following topics:

- GroupWise 5.2 -- Handout for Win95/NT
- FAQ for GroupWise 5.2
- Info on GroupWise for Win3.1
- Computers - Back to the Basics
- Introduction to Windows 95
- Introduction to Word 97
- Advanced Word 97 - MailMerge It Together
- Introduction to Excel 97
- Introduction to PowerPoint 97
- Introduction to Remedy (THE Call-Tracking Program)
- Using Netscape Communicator and the UNT Home Page

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IRC News

Minutes provided by Sue Ellen Richey,
Recording Secretary



IRC Regular Voting Members: Ginny Anderson, Fiscal Affairs; Donna Asher, Administrative Affairs; Walter Bowen, Academic Administration; Bill Buntain, Communications Program Group; Sue Byron, Faculty Senate; Carolyn Cunningham, Student Affairs; Don Grose, Libraries; Jenny Jopling, Instruction Program Group; Joneel Harris, Administrative Program Group; Allen Livingston, Graduate Student Council; Dennis Mueller, Research Program Group (on Sabbatical); Ramu Muthiah, School of Community Services; Jon Nelson, College of Music and Standards & Cooperation Program Group; Robert Nimocks, Director, Information Technology, UNTHSC; Steve Oeffner, UNT Health Science Center Russ Pensyl, School of Visual Arts; Patrick Pluscht, Distributed Learning Team; Jim Poirot College of Education; Mark Rorvig, Research Program Group (acting for Dennis Mueller who is on Sabbatical); Kathleen Swigger, College of Arts and Sciences; Neal Tate, University Planning Council; Philip Turner, Associate Vice President of Academic Affairs for Distance Education and Dean of the School of Library and Information Resources (Chair, IRC); Virginia Wheeless, Chancellor; John Windsor, College of Business. **IRC Ex-officio Nonvoting Members:** Leslie Bowden, Telecommunications; Wil Clark, GALMAC; Jim Curry, Microcomputer Maintenance Shop; Michael Forster, UNT Health Science Center; Richard Harris, Computing Center; Coy Hoggard, Computing Center; Maurice Leatherbury, Computing Center; Sue Ellen Richey, Computing Center (Recording Secretary). [As of 1/99]

July 27, 1999

Distributed Computing Support Management Team

Maurice Leatherbury reported that the Distributed Computing Support Management Team has continued to look at staffing issues and noted that the recommendations that were made to Human Resources to lower the requirements for the support positions have been adopted. They continue to look at the computing support quotient, which is the number of people supporting computers across campus. The ideal that was established a few years ago was one support person for every 100 users. Maurice stated that it appears that that ideal is still being met; therefore, no staffing increases are anticipated at this time. Maurice also reported that the Microsoft Campus Agreement has been signed and delivered to Microsoft; response to UNT's changes to the agreement are anticipated soon. When the agreement is finalized by Microsoft, HiEd will begin selling the Microsoft software in the Bookstore for \$7.00 per CD. The only remaining issue is how to track the purchases, since legally Social Security numbers cannot be given to the vendor. It is hoped that the software CDs will be available in the next 4-6 weeks. Maurice stated that notification will be sent out as soon as the software is available.

Y2K

Coy Hoggard reported that Y2K testing is still being done for some of UNT's integrated systems software. The outstanding issues with the Voice Response system have been dealt with; Brite Voice Systems will come in next week to do their part in the implementation process and then testing of that system can begin.

Another issue is host connectivity. Right now UNT is using a product from Novell called SAA Gateway, which has a Y2K problem. Rather than upgrade that product, it has been decided that it will be replaced with a product from Hummingbird.

Coy reported that Y2K conversion is currently on target.

Communications Program Group

Paul Schlieve reported for the Communications Program Group that Robert Pierce has built a web site for the group, linked from the IRC web page. The new web site has the Program Group's minutes.

Administrative Program Group

Coy Hoggard reported for the Administrative Program Group that in addition to coordination of Y2K activities, in keeping with this Group's commitment to do a review of available products for student support systems, vendors have made presentations of their products and their services. Most recently a presentation was made by The Hunter Group, who specializes in planning and project management.

Research Program Group

Mark Rorvig reported for the Research Program Group that they are preparing a second Internet2 proposal to be released July 30th. He stated that he does not feel confident about the proposal.

Maurice Leatherbury reported that the Alliance for Higher Education has initiated a process by which an investigation is being made into the establishment of a Dallas Gigapop. The internet backbone provider, Qwest, has recently participated in a telephone conference about connectivity. At this point it will be necessary for UNT to define exactly what it needs now. To participate in this AHE project, there would be a considerable up-front cost, of around \$300,000. The largest benefit would be in the lower cost of connection costs after the initial implementation phase. The next step will be for the Alliance to put together a technical plan and a budget.

Maurice admitted that there are a lot of unanswered questions about the entire project, one of which is maintenance and support coverage. Discussion followed.

Guidelines Submitted

Elizabeth Hinkle-Turner distributed a revised draft of the University Computing Assessment and Resources Guidelines, asking the IRC for endorsement. The Guidelines were approved.

Elizabeth also presented the Student Email Procedures and Guidelines for approval. There was a lengthy discussion during which several objections were raised and comments made. David Griffiths reported that the Student Association has discussed these procedures and guidelines and in response has passed a formal resolution responding to it. The resolution requests that there be a trial semester of the student email prior to it becoming a mandatory method of student email. There were comments regarding the problem of forwarding mail from a single UNT account to other email addresses. Maurice Leatherbury stated that new web based mail clients are being looked at to help with the usability of Simeon. Maurice also reported that the student email system will be ready to use within 5-6 weeks; however, it will take a considerable amount of time to set up all students up on the system. Paul Schlieve

commented that there would be a huge advantage to having a central directory of student email addresses, which could be accomplished with a single student email system. Students could then simply forward their mail from that single address to wherever they prefer to read their mail. Carolyn Cunningham commented that a student email system would be a big advantage to the Student Services area in enabling them to communicate with students individually or by groups, and thereby provide better service to students. There was some concern expressed that new students won't know how to access email without some instruction. It was suggested that several administrators who are involved in the implementation of the student email system meet with the Student Association.

Following the discussion, the motion to approve the Student Email guidelines was amended. Implementation of the system will occur as soon as possible, but making an email account on that system mandatory for every student will not be effective until Spring semester of 2000. Also, training and education be made available as soon as the email system is available. Sue Byron moved approval of the Student Email Procedure and Guidelines, as amended. Don Grose seconded and the motion passed with one opposing vote. Maurice clarified that the system will be in place for use in Fall and can be made mandatory by a specific professor or Dean for a specific group of students, if so desired.

Other Items

There was no report from Patrick Pluscht; however, Dr. Turner reported that the Electronic Intellectual Property Policy proposal has gone to the Faculty Senate committee and to the Deans. He invited IRC members to look at it on the Center for Distributed Learning web site (UNT/CDL) or at UNT/LegalAffairs.

Bill Buntain reported that the dormitory wiring project is on schedule with McConnell, West, Clark, and Bruce Halls to be completed by Fall and College Inn to be completed some time during the fall semester. However, the Housing Dept. will not be bringing them all on line at once.

IRC Meeting Schedule

The [IRC](#) generally meets on the third Tuesday of each month, from 2-4 p.m., in the Administration Building Board Room. An exception to that schedule occurred in March of 1999 when it met on the second Tuesday to accommodate the Spring Break schedule.

All meetings of the IRC, its program groups, and other committees, are open to all faculty, staff, and students.

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Staff Activities

Transitions

We welcome the following new employee:

- **Nahareen Alam**, Report Distribution Clerk (part-time).

The following people no longer work in the Computing Center:

- **Frank Digrado**, part-time CPU operator.
- **Tim Largen**, part-time CPU Operator.
- **George Morrow**, ACS Academic Mainframe Programmer/Analyst. Although retired, he continued working part-time under a modified service agreement through July.
- **Stephanie Lindsey**, Microcomputer Consultant (part-time).

Awards, Recognition

- **Don Swatloski**, Database/Central Programming Support Team Leader, **Blair Copeland**, Video Communications Analyst, and **Don Butler**, Student Records Data Systems Team Leader, were recognized in the August 1999 *Human Resources Newsletter* as Soaring Eagles. Blair Copeland was recognized for his work in remodeling the Foreign Language Learning Center. Don Butler was recognized for enabling Early Eagle Orientation. Don Swatloski was recognized for helping a new employee access an administrative mainframe program.

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Campus Computing News

By [Dr. Maurice Leatherbury](#), Senior Director of Academic Computing

Microsoft Campus is Completed!!!

It was touch and go there for awhile but we DID finally get the agreement signed and sent off to Microsoft. We have been notified that Microsoft has signed the agreement, so now we're legal to start distributing the products covered under the Campus Agreement on campus. Any of the following products may be installed on a University-owned machine:

- Office Professional or Standard (Office 97, 2000, or Macintosh)
- FrontPage (97, 2000, or Macintosh)
- Windows OS Upgrade (95, 98, or NT Workstation (not Server))
- Visual Studio Professional
- BackOffice Client Office License
- MS Press Office Starts Here

We're working with the UNT Bookstore and HiEd, our vendor, to sell CD's of the products for \$7.00 per CD for home distribution and hope to have that in place by the end of September. Note that the cost is per CD, not per product, so Office 2000 will cost a whopping \$14 since it's on 2 CD's.

As I said last month, [your network manager](#) should be able to answer any further questions you may have about the Campus Agreement and will help you to get the software installed on your office computer(s).

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Renew PRAS Accounts Now

By [Claudia Lynch](#), *Benchmarks Online Editor*

If you purchased a **Premium Remote Access Service** subscription for the summer semester -- or had paid through the summer -- and you want to keep it, you will need to renew it. You may also need to take action to ensure the continuation of your UNT Internet Account, under certain circumstances. Details for renewal of both these services follows.

Premium Remote Access Service Renewals*

Premium Remote Access Service renewals for the fall '99 semester may be purchased in person or over the phone at the software department of the UNT Bookstore (940-565-3185). Basic subscriptions are \$45. ISDN (128kB) subscriptions cost \$90. This will take your subscription to the end of the year (through December '99).

These subscription renewals will become active Monday, 30 August 1999 and will expire on Tuesday, 18 January 2000. **All subscriptions that have not been renewed by Wednesday, 25 August will be deactivated on Monday, 30 August 1999.** Please E-mail any questions regarding renewal to pras@unt.edu

If you are tired of renewing your account every semester, you might want to consider subscribing to the PRAS service on an annual basis. The cost for a year (September 1999-August 2000) of basic service is \$120. ISDN (128kB) subscriptions cost for a year is \$240 (you must arrange for ISDN service at your home through GTE before you can take advantage of this service).

Internet Service Account Renewals

People who are no longer associated with the University lose their eligibility to have access to many services, including various computing services. If you have been notified that your account is going to be disabled and you are still associated with the University, please contact the Computing Center Helpdesk at (940) 565 2324 or to helpdesk@unt.edu. Retirees may continue to have a UNT Internet Service account, however these accounts must be renewed annually. You may be asked to provide documentation of eligibility for this service due to the absence of available data on retirees at this time.

*Questions about PRAS? We answered some common ones in our [August 1998](#) PRAS renewal article. The [Remote Access](#) area of the Helpdesk Web site is also chock full of information on that topic.

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Accessing GroupWise E-mail From Home

By [John Bradley](#), Campus Wide Networks Desktop Operating Systems Support Group

The GroupWise client that you use at work is now available for you to use from home. If you have an Internet connection, either with a UNT Internet Account or through a separate Internet Service Provider (see the [explanation](#) at the end of this article if you are unsure), you can access your GroupWise E-mail box from your Windows-based or Macintosh computer at home.

How to get it

There are three ways that you can get your hands on it:

1. Call [your network manager](#) .
2. Go to the Reserves desk in Willis Library and ask for the GroupWise version 5.2 CD, listed under the call numbers 6233 through 6237.
3. In your Web browser, surf to <http://www.unt.edu/cwn> and click on the link to download the GroupWise clients. Keep in mind that these are huge files and will take considerable time to download. Installation instructions are available on the download page.

Why to get it

Of all the possible ways to check your GroupWise E-mail from home, using the GroupWise client is by far the best. Consider the following features:

- **GroupWise client:** Full, reliable access to all E-mail, folders, tasks, appointments and calendar items. This is exactly the same client you currently use in your office, and provides identical functionality (except for access to the GroupWise archive). All communication with the GroupWise post office is encrypted, ensuring that your email will be secure as it travels from your home computer to the GroupWise post office.
- **WebAccess:** (<http://gww.unt.edu>) Limited access to email, folders, tasks, appointments and calendar items. Since it is Web-based, it's not as reliable or robust as the GroupWise client. Communication between your Web browser and the GroupWise Web server is encrypted and secure.
- **Other:** Other email clients such as Netscape Messenger (included with Netscape Communicator) and Outlook Express (included with Internet Explorer) can be used to read your GroupWise E-mail, but you will have no access to any of GroupWise's calendaring features. Communication between the mail client and the GroupWise server is clear-text, meaning

that it is not encrypted and could conceivably be compromised.

What to do when you get it

Installation is quick and easy. Full instructions are included on the CD. If you download it, just print out the instructions on the download page and follow them.

Explanation of Internet Access:

Internet access through a UNT Internet Account or and Internet Service Provider means that you can use the modem in your computer to dial in and connect to the Internet. Once connected, you would be able to use programs such as Netscape or Internet Explorer. If you have a UNT Premium Access account and dial in to the Denton, Dallas or Fort Worth Premium Access lines using your modem, then you have a UNT Internet Account. If you dial in to the UNT free lines, then you have a UNT Internet Account. If you use AOL, CompuServe, GTE.net, FlashNet, Internet America, Internet Global, etc, then you're using an Internet Service Provider.

If you're not sure what you have or whether or not your computer has or is capable of having Internet access, please call the Computing Center Support Services Helpdesk at (940) 565-2324.

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SPSS on CMS to be Dropped

By [Dr. Philip Baczewski](#), Associate Director of Academic Computing

In our recent efforts to renew our software subscriptions for Fiscal Year 2000, we have recently discovered that we cannot renew SPSS for CMS for the coming fiscal year. SPSS for MVS on the Academic Mainframe will continue to be available, however, the version that runs directly on CMS will cease to work after 9/30/99.

The CMS version of SPSS is not year 2000 compliant and SPSS Inc. recently announced that they would not be releasing a Y2K compliant version of SPSS for CMS. According to UNT's legal affairs department, recent changes in State law prevent us from signing a license agreement for a product for which we must acknowledge that it is not Y2K compliant.

SPSS Inc. has announced a Y2K "patch" for the MVS version of SPSS. They anticipate that it will be available in September and we will install it once it is received. Programs which have been run using SPSS on CMS can still be run via batch submission to MVS with the addition of JCL to the program. Those requiring assistance in adding JCL to their CMS SPSS programs and submitting them to MVS should contact the Academic Computing Research and Statistical Support office (x. 2140 or x. 4066, or see <http://www.unt.edu/rss/>).

We regret any inconvenience this late notice will cause, however, as mentioned above, we have only recently learned that we cannot renew this product. It is apparent that SPSS' ongoing support for its mainframe products is tenuous. Researchers who would like support for moving their research activities from the Mainframe to a PC or UNIX platform may contact the ACS Research and Statistical Support office for help (see <http://www.unt.edu/rss/software.htm> for further information).

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The UNIX Question

By [Duane Gustavus](#), UNIX Research Analyst

Having just completed my fifty-third trip around the sun, I am not surprised to find that in a world of change, some problems are remarkably persistent. It has been many years since my Mom first asked me to explain what UNIX was so she could tell her friends when they asked about my new job. Since she had never heard the term software before, we had to settle for something like "he works with computers". I have sometimes tried to imagine the kinds of images this conjured up in the minds of her contemporaries. Now almost everyone I meet owns a computer, but I still find myself in similar straights when I try to answer the UNIX question.

On the other hand, does that really matter? Aren't there areas of specialized knowledge in every subject that are not expected to be of interest to the uninitiated? I know I have employed that argument many times with my teenaged godchild when fashion priorities dominate conversation. Perhaps I am too close to the issue to retain a catholic perspective, but let me try to explain why I think it is worth knowing a little about UNIX, even if you never intend to use it.

I might as well admit at this point that I am going to have to turn the "way back" dial to the Ancient History setting (say twenty years ago). I will try to be brief in my reminiscences of bygone eras, but it is necessary to set some context to make the point. The house lights dim; Stravinsky fades in as the curtain rises on a scene straight out of the Dawn of the Age of Information . . .

In the beginning . . .

UNIX began life as a research project in a large corporation. Since it did not follow the accepted wisdom for computer products at the time, UNIX appeared to have little relevance outside of computer research (meaning nobody concerned could see much potential for making money off of it). For some time further work was only pursued at a few academic sites, notably the University of California at Berkeley. Over the ensuing years, UNIX developed a small but dedicated following as an alternative computing environment to the centralized mainframe model which held sway at the time (this was the age of dinosaurs remember; personal computers hadn't evolved yet). The primary reason UNIX prospered was that research often involves working in a new way; the flexibility allowed by access to the source code -- so you can change the way things work - is often more important in research than the availability of lots of business applications.

From its earliest development stages, therefore, UNIX has been the focus of a group who were more interested in the "technology" of UNIX than the marketing of a product. This has made an interesting (dare I say a vital) difference between UNIX and other currently popular computing environments. As time passed and UNIX "grew" it was adopted as the native computer environment by several hardware vendors, but it's popularity was

constrained by the fact that it required significant hardware resource to provide reasonable performance (in the parlance of the day, you needed "big iron" to run UNIX). This legacy can still be seen when folks refer to the same hardware as a "workstation" when it runs UNIX and a "PC" when it runs Windows or MacOS.

Time marches on

The wave of personal computing radically changed the marketplace for information technology (appropriately accompanied by thunder, lightning, earthquakes and general chaos in the computer biz). The focus for computing environments now became "user friendly" because the potential volume of units that could be projected for profit margin calculations was very attractive if every home in America could be targeted. In order to create this large market, the computer's image in the public imagination needed to be changed from "expensive cabinets of blinking lights sequestered in glass rooms hovered over by technicians in white lab coats" to "your plastic pal who's fun to be with." The transformation from essential corporate machinery to desirable (becoming essential?) home appliance has taken place with impressive speed -- compare the "soul-less machine" Hal of 2001 with the quintessentially honest helpmate Hal became in 2010. Kids today don't have "computer phobia" because they associate computers with games and conversations with other kids in other parts of the world instead of a deluge of numbers interesting only to eggheads. In this, at least, they were better served by the media than we.

While Microsoft and Apple basked in the glory of unprecedented market success, many interested in the technology (as opposed to the the business) of computer software were often pushed by financial considerations and seemingly endless legal encroachments towards UNIX. When hardware costs were lowered by the volume that could be moved into the personal computer market, it was only natural that UNIX be ported to this platform. The process was aided and abetted by Berkeley, MIT's Free Software Foundation and others contributing UNIX source code to the public domain where its evolution was subject to both the whim and ingenuity of individuals world wide. Now, add the cross-pollination inevitable with increased subscription to the Internet, and ideas like Linux bloom.

It's free?

What, you may well ask, is so fundamentally important about Linux? It is the direct lineal descendent of a computing research project that has survived and prospered largely on its adaptability to technological evolution. UNIX has been critical to the birth and promulgation of ideas like c/c++, perl, email, the Internet, net news and yes, even the World Wide Web (you may be interested to learn that none of these ideas began as commercial products). But my case is not based on the fact that UNIX has always been favored by geeks instead of marketing hype. Today, Linux and the other "free" UNIX variants represent the most powerful computer operating environment you can own.

That word "own" is the kicker isn't it? By own I don't mean the right to use under legal contract with binding restrictions; I mean to possess with the right to copy, redistribute, sell or print the source code on a tee shirt if you think it's cool.

"Yeah yeah," you say, "but it doesn't really matter who owns your computing environment as long as you can use it to get the job done." Certainly not, as long as you don't mind paying some company to make all the decisions about your information access for you. Imagine for a moment that Carnegie had decided what the country needed was a large network of private, instead of public, libraries. Anyone could access the information stored in those libraries if they purchased a library card (remember it costs money to buy and house all those books). So what if the first few pages of Dante's "Inferno" were rented for advertisement space, and most margins in "The Origin of Species" littered with marketing babble? If it weren't for large corporations the books wouldn't be there, and anyway, you have to expect them to make a profit some how. Of course, some books which contain especially valuable information would be on the reserved list, but you could even get a peek at them for an additional "priority access fee." What did you expect? It is, after all, the Information Business now.

I won't belabor the analogy further because it isn't intended as biting satire but as a reminder that history is rife with examples of attempts to control people by controlling their access to information. Whether it is attempted by governments, religions or businesses, the antidote has always been the same: increased public access to information. Voltaire wrote many volumes of celebrated prose on this subject (available in English translation at your public library for free if you're interested) during what historians refer to as the "Age of Enlightenment." In our milieu, the end of twentieth century United States of America, we prefer our philosophy in a form that fits on a bumper sticker. "Know your Rights" seems like a reasonable start.

The next time you find yourself frustrated with the "improvements" or incompatible new "features" your chosen software vendor has provided in the name of increased productivity, remember that you have options. As a member of the public, you own a world-class computing environment. Even if you find spending the time to learn some version of UNIX unpalatable, recognize that the existence of a viable alternative is your most potent weapon in dealing with your chosen vendor. The free software movement has already made the most rabid of capitalist companies start employing terms like "[open](#)" to describe their proprietary products (if you are confused by their unusual definition of the word open, at least you can admire their panache). It might even be worth some of your idle time to learn a bit about this stuff because . . . well I think it's always a good idea to know your rights.

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Computer Virus!!!!

By [Wil Clark](#), ACS General Access Lab Manager and Campus Virus Guru

Never mind, it was just a hoax.

I know it has happened to you. If you work at UNT it happened to you on August 3. No, you didn't get a whopping \$1200 raise. You received an E-mail message forwarded to you from someone with good intentions. He wanted you to beware of a new and very destructive computer virus. What he did not know was that he had fallen victim to a very common hoax.

Hoaxes, urban legends, old wives' tales and pranks all seem to seep into every corner of society. E-mail has provided ready fuel for the hoax wildfires.

Remember you can still question the source and validity of statements you read in e-mail and on web sites. I guess it is an innate human characteristic to trust things you read.

So today I will give you my "It might be a hoax if..." list.

It might be a hoax if...

- You need to forward it to every one you know!
- You need to forward it immediately!
- You know it's true because a friend of a guy's sister who rides the bus with her co-worker called and verified that it is real!
- Your processor will be put in an nth-complexity infinite binary loop. Your mouse will become infected. The message came from Walt Disney Jr. himself.
- You stand to receive \$5000 just for forwarding the mail.
- Someone ends up with a tube in his back in a hotel bathtub full of ice in the Big Easy.
- You see more exclamation marks than any other punctuation!!!!

The **number one** giveaway is the presence of "FORWARD THIS TO EVERYONE YOU KNOW IMMEDIATELY!" This sentence has hoax written all over it.

So, still feel the next message might have some validity to it? Then check it out. These Web sites list known hoaxes:

- <http://vil.mcafee.com/hoax.asp>
- <http://www.urbanlegends.com>
- <http://www.snopes.com>

Most importantly, the real danger of a virus hoax is becoming desensitized to virus warnings. Many virus warnings are real. The things real warnings have in common are:

1. A verifiable source.
2. Rare usage of the exclamation mark.
3. They lack the statement "FORWARD THIS TO EVERYONE YOU KNOW IMMEDIATELY".

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Going Somewhere?

By [Sharon Marek](#) , Web Developer, UNT Central Web Support

Travelling anytime soon? There's still time to get away before the fall semester starts. I consulted most of these Web sites before my last vacation, and thought the list might be useful to you.

International Travel Information

The home page for the [US State Department's Bureau of Consular Affairs](#) is one of the best places to find international travel information. Everything from [passports](#) to [travel warnings](#) is covered there. Foreign embassies are also a great source of information for the countries they represent. Embassies located in Washington, D.C. are listed at <http://www.embassy.org/> Most embassies on the list have Web sites, but those that don't provide postal addresses, E-mail addresses, or links to other representative Web sites.

Healthy Travel

[CDC Travel Information](#), a service of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, has health recommendations divided geographically, making it easy to find the vaccinations necessary to safely travel anywhere. And [Health LINK](#), from the Medical College of Wisconsin, is full of great travel health information.

Other Sources of Travel Information

Several popular travel guides have Web sites. Two of the best are [Rough Guide Travel](#) and [Lonely Planet Online](#). Usenet also has a lot of worthwhile travel information, and <http://www.deja.com/> is one of the best ways to get to that information. Yahoo has an enormous travel section at <http://dir.yahoo.com/Recreation/Travel/> -- and that includes a section on travel-related businesses.